

Num 13-1 to 15-41 Torah Reading (Parshat Sh'lach)
English version to be sung to the Torah tropes by Len Fellman
Latest version June 16, 2020

13:1 Then spoke YHWH to Moses, saying,

2 [Send out] [for yourself, men] [to scout out] the land of Cāna'an, that I am about to give to the children of Israel, a man—[just one man]—one man each, [from the tribe] of his fathers [you will send]: [each one] a chieftain among them.

3 [And so] [he sent them]—[Moses sent them away] from the desert of Paran, at the word of YHWH: all men of stature: heads of B'nei Yisrael they were.

4 Now these [were their names]: for the tribe of Reuben, Shamua son of Zakur.

5 For the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat son of Chori.

6 For the tribe of Judah, Caleb son of Yefuneh.

7 For the tribe of Issachar, Yig'al son of Joseph.

8 For the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea son of Nun.

9 For the tribe of Benjamin, Palti son of Raphu.

10 For the tribe of Zebulun, Gadiel son of Sodi.

11 For the tribe of Joseph, from the tribe of Manasseh, Gaddi son of Susi.

12 For the tribe of Dan, Amiel son of Gemalli.

13 For the tribe of Asher, Sethur son of Michael.

14 For the tribe of Naphtali, Nachbi son of Vafsi.

15 For the tribe of Gad, Geu'el son of Makhi.

16 These are the names of the men that were sent by Moses to scout out the land.

[And there was given] [by Moses a name] to Hoshea son of Nun—the name Joshua.

17 When he sent the men—Moses—to explore the land of Canaan,

he said [this to them]: “Go up this way through the Negev; then go up [through the hill-country].

18 And see the land—[what it is like]—and the people that are settled within it.

Are they strong or are they weak? Are they few or are they many?

19 And how [is the land] there where [they are dwelling] in it. Is it good or is it bad?

How [are the towns], those where they are settled [in them]: are they open or are they fortified?

20 And what [is the state of the soil]? Is it fat [or is it lean]? [Do you find there] trees, or not?

[You must strengthen yourselves] to bring some of the fruit of the land.” [Now these days] [end aliyah] were the days of the first ripe grapes.

13:21 [So they went up] and scouted out the land, from the Wilderness of Tzin as far as Rechov, coming toward Chamath.

22 [They went up] [through the Negev] and came to Hebron. There were Achiman, Sheshai, and Talmi, descendants of Anak. [Now Hebron] [had for seven] years [been built] before Tzo'an of Egypt.

23 [And so they came] to the wadi [Nachal Eshkol] ("valley of clusters"). They cut down [from there] a branch [and a cluster] of grapes, [a single one]—it was carried on a pole [by two men]—and some pomegranates and some figs.

24 That place they called *Wadi Eshkol*, on account of the cluster that was cut from there, by the children of Israel.

25 They returned from exploring the land at the end of forty days.

26 [And when they arrived] they came before Moses and Aaron [and the whole congregation] [*B'nei Yisrael*] in the Wilderness of Paran near Kadesh.

[They brought back] [to them] word and to the entire assembly, [and showed them] the fruit of the land.

27 [They reported to him], [and they] said, "[We have arrived] at the land to which you sent us, [and yes it is true:], flowing with milk [and flowing with honey] [it is indeed]. [And here is its fruit].

28 [Except that] fierce are the people that dwell in the land. [The cities we saw] [are fortified] and large exceedingly. Also the children of Anak we saw there.

29 And Amalek dwells in the land of the Negev. [And also the Hittites], the Yebusites, and the Amorites live [in the hills]. The Caananites live [near the sea] and on the banks of the Jordan."

30 [Then calling for silence], [Caleb did quiet] the people [before Moses] [and he said this]: "[Let's go up there]: go up and take [possession of it], because we surely [can do it]!"

31 But all of the men [who went up] [with him] [said this]: "We are not able [to go up] [against the people], since stronger they are than we."

32 [So they sent out] [a bad report] of the land—the land that they [had scouted out] to *B'nei Yisrael*, [saying this]: "[Regarding this country we saw]:—[this land] that we just crossed through in order [to investigate it]: a land [that devours] its inhabitants it is, [and all of the the people] that we saw within it are men of great size.

13:33 And there, [here's what we saw]: [the giant men], the sons of Anak, [who come from the Nephilim].
 We were [in our own eyes] like grasshoppers, and the same we were also in their eyes.”

14:1 [Then lifted up] the entire assembly [and let out] their voice, and the people wept, on that night.

2 They complained to Moses and to Aaron—all *B'nei Yisrael*.
 And they said to them—the whole community: “[Had we but died] in the land of Egypt, [or even] in this desert, [would that we had died]!”

3 Why [is YHWH] bringing us to a land [like this] to fall by the sword? [✓ trope: *merchah khefulah*]
 Our wives and our children will be carried off. [Indeed would it not] [truly be better for us] [if we went] back to Egypt?

4 And they said, [each man] to his brother: “Let us head back, and return to Egypt.”

5 [Then fell] [Moses as well as] Aaron [on their faces] [in the presence of] the whole assembled community, *B'nei Yisrael*.

6 And Joshua [son of Nun] and Caleb [son of Yefuneh]—[from those who explored] the land—ripped their garments.

7 [They then] spoke to the whole community *B'nei Yisrael*, saying this:
 “[As for the land] that [we did cross] through to scout it out, [end aliyah] is a good land, very much so.

8 [If He is pleased] with us—YHWH, [He will] [bring us] to the land—[to this land], and give it to us:
 [it is a land] [that is known to be] flowing with milk and honey.

9 [But surely] [against YHWH] [you must not rebel!] [I say this to you]: [have no fear] of the people [of the land]: food for us, [they will be].
 Departed [is their protection] (“shade”) [from over them]. YHWH is with us. [Do not be afraid].”

10 [They said]—the entire assembly—to pelt them with stones.
 But the glory [of YHWH] appeared in the Tent of Meeting, [to all the children] of Israel.

11 And said YHWH to Moses, “How long will they scorn Me, the nation—these people?
 How long [will they not] [trust Me], with all of the signs that I have performed in their midst?

12 Let me strike them with the plague, [and disown them], [and I will make] of you a nation greater and mightier than they.”

13 And replied Moses to YHWH,
 “[When they hear]—the Egyptians—[that you brought them up] [through your own power]—this people, [from your midst],

14:14 [they will tell about it] (YHWH's plague on the Israelites) [to the people that are living] in this land.
 [They have heard] that You, YHWH [are in the midst] of this people, [that eye-to-eye] [You have revealed Yourself] —You Yourself, YHWH,
 Your cloud standing [over them]. In [a pillar of cloud], You went out [before them] by day, and in a pillar of fire by night.
 15 [Should you put to death] this people here, [like one single] man, then will speak the nations who have heard of your fame, declaring,
 16 “[It was from a lack] of power [by YHWH] to bring forth this people to the land [that he swore] to them, [and so he slew them] in the desert.”
 17 [And so now] let there be magnified the strength of my Lord, just as You spoke when You said,
 18 “YHWH, slow to anger and great in kindness, bearing iniquity, [and sin],
 remitting, [yet not all] remitting, [but rather visiting] the sins of the parents on the children [to the third generation], [and to the fourth].”
 19 [So forgive Thee, I pray], the iniquities of this people, in the greatness of your kindness,
 [just as] You forgave this people [from the days of Egypt] until now.
 20 [Then said] YHWH, “I have pardoned, [because of your words].
 21 Nevertheless as I live, filled by the glory of YHWH [shall be the whole earth].
 22 Indeed [all the people] [who have seen] My glory and my signs that I did in Egypt and in the desert,
 and who [have tested Me] [as many] as [ten times], and did not listen to My voice.
 23 [Will they see] the land that I have sworn to their ancestors? All those who scorned Me will not see it.
 24 But my servant Caleb: because [there was found] a spirit [of another sort] [within him], completely [following Me],
 [I will bring him] into the land [that he is] [about to enter]. His seed will possess it.
 25 The Amalakites and the Caananites now dwell in the valleys.
 [Tomorrow therefore], face about [and travel], [making your way] [end aliyah] along the road to the Red Sea.”
 26 Then spoke YHWH to Moses and Aaron as follows.
 27 [Until what time] for a community so bad [as this one], [will they in fact] keep on complaining against Me?
 [Indeed the complaints] of the children of Israel—the way [that they are] murmuring against Me, [I have heard].
 28 Speak [these words to them]: “[As I live]—[thus says YHWH]—[will it now be] just as you have spoken in My ears,
 just so will I do to you.

14:29 In the desert—[this very wilderness]—will fall your dead bodies: [all those counted for battle]—[all of your number] [who are of age] twenty years and upwards—because you complained [against Me].

30 [Will you indeed] enter the land that I have sworn [with My uplifted hand] to have you dwell therein, [with the exception] of Caleb son of Yefunah, and Joshua son of Nun.

31 [But your little ones], of whom you said that as booty [they would be seized], I will bring them in. [They will know] the land even though you [have spurned it].

32 But your corpses, [your own bodies], will fall [in the wilderness here].

33 [But as for your children]: they [will roam] in the desert forty years, [bearing the weight] [of your faithlessness], till the last one among you lies dead in the desert.

34 For the number of days [that you scouted] [out the land]—forty days; one day [for a year]: a day [corresponds to a year]. You shall bear your iniquities for forty years, [and you shall know] [the ways that I act].

35 [It is I]—YHWH who have spoken. [Surely, will I not] do [this very thing] [to the whole assembly] [that is evil]—[this community], that has conspired [against Me]? [In the desert]—[here in this place], [they will meet their end]; there they shall die.

36 And as for the men who were sent by Moses to scout out the land, [and who came back] [and set to grumbling] [against him], the whole assembly, putting forth an ill report about the land

37 They died—[these very men] who brought the report about the land—[a bad report]. [They died in the plague] before YHWH.

38 And Joshua [son of Nun] and Caleb [son of Yefunah] [remained alive] [among the men] [who were sent out]— [who went out] to scout the land.”

39 Then related Moses all these words [to all the children] of Israel, and there mourned the people greatly.

40 [They rose early] in the morning. They went up to the top of the mountain, and said, “[We are now prepared]. [We shall go up] [to that very place] that was spoken of by YHWH, for we have sinned.”

41 And answered Moses, “[Why will you] [do this thing], going against the word of YHWH? It will surely not succeed.

42 [Do not] go up, [because you must know]: you won’t have YHWH [with you], lest you be smitten before your enemies.

14:43 [Indeed you will see]: the Amalekite and the Canaanite are there [in front of you]. You will fall by the sword.
[For since you have] turned from following YHWH, you will not have YHWH [there with you].”

44 [Yet defiantly] [they went up] to the top of the mountain,
while the Ark [of the covenant of YHWH] [as well as Moses] [did not stir] from the midst of the camp.
45 [Then came down] the Amalekite and the Canaanite who dwelt on that mountain,
and pursued them and routed them, [as far as Chormah].

15:1 [Then spoke YHWH] to Moses, saying,

2 Speak to the children of Israel, [and say this] to them:

“When [you have arrived] in the land [where you are] to live—the land that I am giving to you,

3 you will make [a fire offering] to YHWH, an *olah* (burnt offering) or a sacrifice [to fulfill a vow] or as a contribution or [for your festivals],
to produce [a soothing fragrance] to YHWH [from the cattle] [or from the flock].

4 [He must bring forth]—the one who offers his sacrifice, to YHWH—

a *minchah* (grain offering) [of fine meal]—[one-tenth of an *ephah*] (about 2 qts.) [and it shall be mixed] with one-quarter *hin* (1 qt.) of oil.

5 And wine for the libation—[one-quarter] *hin*—you must offer with the *olah*, or with the sacrifice, for a sheep—[for each one].

6 Or for the ram you must offer a *minchah*: [fine flour], two-tenths of an *ephah* to be mixed with oil, in the amount one-third *hin*.

7 [The wine for the libation], one third of a *hin*, [end aliyah] offered as a pleasing fragrance, to YHWH.

8 Should you offer a bull as an *olah* or sacrifice, to fulfill a vow or as a peace-offering to YHWH,

9 [then he shall bring forth] with the bull a *minchah*: [fine flour], three-tenths of an *ephah* mixed with oil, in the amount one-half *hin*.

10 [And as for wine], bring forth as a libation, a half of a *hin*: a fire offering of pleasing fragrance, to YHWH.

11 [In this way] [it shall be done] for an ox—[for each one], or for a ram—[for each one], or for a lamb of the sheep, or the goats.

12 [For the number] that [you will do], [in just this way] you will do for each one, [according to their number].

13 Every native in this manner shall do these, [when he brings forth] a fire offering of pleasing fragrance, to YHWH.

14 [If there resides] with you an alien [or one] [who is among you] throughout your generations,

[he shall then prepare] a fire offering of pleasing fragrance, to YHWH: in the manner that you do, so must he do.

15:15 [Just as for the assembly], the statute [will be the same] for the stranger [who dwells with you]—
a law for the ages throughout your generations [as it is for you], so for the alien it shall be, before YHWH.

16 [Indeed the torah] (instruction) [shall be one]: the rule shall be one, as well for you [end aliyah] [as for the stranger] who resides with you.

17 Then spoke YHWH, to Moses, saying,

18 Speak to the children of Israel, [and say this] to them: “When you come to the land—[and know that I] am about to bring you there—
19 [then it shall be] [when you eat] of the bread of the land, you shall set aside a donation, to YHWH.

20 [The first yield] of [your kneading troughs], [a round loaf] you shall present in donation.
[Like the donation] [from the threshing floor], thus, you shall present it.

21 [From the first yield] of [your kneading troughs], you shall give to YHWH, a donation—throughout your generations.

22 If you should err (root: sh-g-g or sh-g-h) and fail to do all the commandments, [these being] the ones told by YHWH to Moses,
23 [these being] all [that were commanded] [by YHWH] to you, at the hand of Moses,
[from the day] that [commands were first given] [by YHWH] and onwards, for your generations.

24 [And if it should be] that [away from the eyes] [of the congregation], it was done by mistake,
[then they must prepare]—[the entire community]—a bull [from the herd]: one, as an *olah* (burnt offering) [for a pleasing] fragrance to YHWH
and its *minchah* (grain offering) and its libation, [according to law], and a goat—one young he-goat—as a *chattat* (sin offering).

25 [A rite of atonement] [the priest will perform] [over the whole congregation], of *B'nei Yisrael*, [and it will be forgiven] them. Unintentional
it was, [and they will indeed] bring their offering of fire [to YHWH] [and their *chattat*] before YHWH [for their inadvertence] (*shegagah*).

26 [It will be forgiven] [to the whole assembly] of *B'nei Yisrael*, and to the alien who dwells in their midst,
[end aliyah] since all of the people, [acted in error].

27 If a *nefesh*—one person, should sin inadvertently, [then he must bring forth] a she-goat in its first year, as a *chattat*.

28 [Atonement will be offered] [by the *cohen*] [over that *nefesh*] [who acted in error], by sinning inadvertently, before YHWH.
[The priest atones for him], [and he is forgiven].

29 For the native of *B'nei Yisrael* and for the stranger who dwells in their midst,
the torah (instruction) is one that applies to you, [for ones acting] in error.

15:30 [But as for the *nefesh*] [who is in defiance]—[acting[with a high hand]—[among the natives] [or among the aliens], it is YHWH Whom he disdains. [He shall be cut off]—the *nefesh*—that person—from the midst of his people.

31 [Since the word] of YHWH [he has spurned]; God's commandments he has violated. [He must be cast out]—[cut off he will be]—the *nefesh*—that person. His sin is upon him.

32 While *B'nei Yisrael*, [were in the desert], [they found a man]—[a person was caught], gathering wood, on the day of the sabbath.

33 And [they brought him]—those who found him, gathering wood—to Moses and to Aaron, and to [the whole community].

34 And they placed him, under guard, because it had not been determined what should be done [to him].

35 And said YHWH to Moses, "Doomed to die, is that man. Pelt the man with stones—the whole community—outside the camp."

36 So they brought him—the whole community—outside the camp, and [they pelted him] with stones, and he died, [just as it was] commanded by YHWH, to Moses.

37 And spoke YHWH, to Moses, saying:

38 [You must speak] to the children of Israel and say to them [that they are to make] [for themselves] [*tzitzit* or tassels] on the corners of their garments, [throughout their generations], [and they are to put] on the corner tassel, [a thread of blue-violet].

39 [It shall be] for you a *tzitzit*, that you [may look upon it] [and keep in mind] all the commandments of YHWH, [that you should observe] them, [that you not go straying] after your heart, and after your eyes, to which you prostitute yourselves;

40 so that you may remember and observe [all my commandments], and so be holy, to your God.

41 [I am indeed] YHWH—[I am your God], who [took you] out [from the land] of Egypt, to be to you, a God. [end aliyah] I am YHWH your God.

Len Fellman's English readings with tropes

The purpose of this project is to translate *THE SONG OF THE TORAH* into English.

I work by comparing as many as ten English translations of a *pasuk* and creating a cantillated English sentence that sounds as much as possible like the Hebrew. They follow the Hebrew as closely as possible, word for word and trope by trope. The English language has an amazing flexibility, making it possible to make the English word order match that of the Hebrew quite well, allowing for some “poetic licence”, and some willingness on the part of the listener to be “carried” by the melody more than by the English syntax. The translation needs to sound good when *chanted*, but not necessarily when *spoken or read*.

Unlike most translations, these “transtropilations” are not intended to be a substitute for the Hebrew. On the contrary, they are meant to provide a “window” into the Hebrew text and its musical expression. My ideal listener knows enough Hebrew and has enough interest to follow the Hebrew in a bilingual text while the *leyner* is chanting the English version, to bring the Hebrew text to life, both *verbally* and *musically*. For this purpose I use *exactly* the same tropes in the English as in the Hebrew (almost always on the corresponding English word).

The texts can be used to do **consecutive translation**, i.e. leyning a phrase in Hebrew, followed by the corresponding phrase sung in English. Some of my recordings demonstrate this. I do this frequently when leyning for groups that either know little Hebrew, or that don't have a *chumash* in front of them.

I favor literal translations (e.g. “cut a covenant”) to call attention to Hebrew idioms, and towards simpler (even if less accurate) words (e.g. Ex. 12:7 “beam above the door” rather than “lintel”) to be easier to follow. If my readings provoke a discussion of the Hebrew, I consider that as justification for using less-than-idiomatic English. I try to find just the right balance between “literalness” and “listenable-ness”. A primary goal is throwing light on the Hebrew syntax.

In order to adapt the trope symbols to a left-to-right language like English, I *reversed* the direction of the trope symbols:

mercha tipcha munach tevir mapakh or yetiv kadma or pashta gersh gershayim telisha katana telisha gedola

(Generally speaking the *conjunctive tropes* such as mercha, munach, mapakh, kadma, and telisha katana “lean toward” the words they “conjoin” to, while the *disjunctive tropes* such as tipcha, gersh, gershayim, and telisha gedola “lean away” from the words that follow, so as to create a sense of separation.)

The trope symbol is normally placed under the accented syllable, unless it is a *pre-positive* accent (telisha gedola, placed *at the beginning* of the word or phrase) or a *post-positive* one (telisha katana or pashta, placed at the *end* of the word or phrase).

The Hebrew text frequently puts a *makkeph* (which is like a hyphen) between words in order to treat them as a single word to be chanted. I use a different system for English: If an entire English phrase is to be chanted to a single trope melody, I place it between grey brackets, as in this phrase from the Book of Lamentations:

[clings to her skirts]

The *leyner* is invited to fit this phrase to the *Eicha* “rivi'i” melody in whatever way seems most natural.

As a variant of the “grey bracket” device, I indicate the following pairs of tropes by “wrapping them around” the phrase which will have the combined melody:

mercha/tipcha	kadma/geresh (or: azla, etc.)	mercha siluk
⏟Renew our days⏟	⏟She weeps bitterly⏟	⏟a fire-offering to God⏟

Again, the *leyner* should decide on the most natural way to fit the phrase to the combined trope melody.

I put words in gray which I consider essential but which don’t strictly match the Hebrew. I also “pad” some phrases with extra words in gray to fill out a musical phrase nicely. Different trope systems vary widely in the length of the musical phrase used, so the words in gray may or not be used depending on the *leyner*’s cantillation system. In particular, the tropes *telisha g’dola* (ר), *legarmeh*, *metigah-zakef*, and *pazer* vary widely in the musical phrases used for chanting. (And please indulge me in my whimsical treatments of *shalshelet*.)

“*Metigah-zakef*” is a special trope combination which can be recognized by a kadma and a zakef katon appearing on the same Hebrew word (again, a *makkeph* makes two words into one). (There are several examples in Genesis 18 & 19, beginning with 18:16). I indicate this by placing the corresponding English phrase in grey brackets:

[Take heed—take care for yourself]

In some trope systems (notably cantor Moshe Haschel in “Navigating the Bible II”) this is given a very distinctive melody—for which purpose extra syllables fill out the musical phrase (as in “take care” in this example). Haschel’s system also chants the trope *munach* as *legarmeh* more often than other systems do.

I don’t write a single word of translation without first hearing the melody of the phrase in my mind, following one of two trope systems: The one by Portnoy and Wolff (*The Art of Cantillation*) or the one by Joshua R. Jacobson (*Chanting the Hebrew Bible*).

I transcribe the name יהוה as YHWH (in small caps). I almost always chant this as *yud-hey-vav-hey*, which I have discovered fits marvelously into several of the trope melodies. But of course the *leyner* can choose to pronounce it as “God” or “Adonai”.

The English translations I mostly use (besides several scholarly commentaries) are the following:

Aryeh Kaplan, ‘The Living Torah’ (1981) (also my source for proper names & transliterations)
 Richard Elliott Friedman, ‘The Bible With Sources Revealed’ (2003)
 Everett Fox, ‘The Five Books of Moses’ (1997)
 The Stone Edition ‘Tanach’ (1996)
 JPS ‘Hebrew-English Tanach’, (2nd Ed. 2000), *along with* Orlinsky, ‘Notes on the New Translation of the Torah’ (1969)
 Robert Alter, ‘The Five Books of Moses’ (2004)
 Commentaries in the ‘Anchor Bible’ series
 Rotherham, The Emphasized Bible (1902)
 The Jerusalem Bible (1966) (also my source for topic headings)
 The New King James Bible (1982)